From: Oetker, Susan
To: Snyder, Caitlin
Subject: mexico
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(1) Comment: One peer reviewer, NMDGF, and four commenters stated that we should not presume the species has been extirpated from all locations in Mexico, given the lack of surveys particularly from the Gulf Coastal region.

Our Response: We agree. While we have relatively recent survey information for the Rio Salado (most recent surveys occurred in 2004), the information from the coastal Mexican rivers was generally collected in the 1980s and 1990s. We have examined available imagery from rivers in the Gulf Coastal region of Mexico, and it does seem plausible that the species may remain extant in this region. The imagery does not provide information on water levels or water quality in those rivers, however, and so we cannot assume any populations are large or healthy, nor identify exactly where they may occur. The only recent information we have regarding Texas hornshell populations in Mexico are in the Rio Salado. This population was origially reported in 1891. When it was revisited in 2004 (Strenth *et al*. 2004, p. 227), household waste was found throughout the river and no live individuals were found. Therefore, while Mexican populations may be extant today, we have little confidence that they are large or protected from threats. While we have updated our language to reflect the possibility that Texas hornshell populations may remain extant in coastal Mexican rivers, we are not able to rely on any of these potential populations to maintain Texas hornshell viability into the future. We have incorporated this information into the species' current condition in the SSA report and in this final rule.

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